

Ten years ago the Institute of Medicine issued [To Err is Human](#) , a ground-breaking report that estimated that as many as 98,000 people died each year in U.S. hospitals because of medical errors. This staggering statistic, which is higher than the number of deaths due to traffic accidents, breast cancer, or AIDS, helped launch the modern patient safety movement.

In 2005, Congress passed the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act, which created patient safety organizations that share information about medical errors, adverse events, and “near misses” without fear of litigation. New Jersey has created a patient safety organization, the [Institute for Quality and Patient Safety](#) , which has successfully limited infections in intensive care units, reduced pressure ulcers, and helped hospitals implement medical emergency teams. Another key outcome of the patient safety movement has been greater transparency. Several new websites provide useful resources for patients considering health care options and hospital performance, including [New Jersey Hospital Care Compare](#) [N](#)
, the national [Hospital Compare](#)
, and the [New Jersey Hospital Performance Report](#)
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Yet more work is required to improve patient safety. New research is needed to understand what treatments work best for different conditions. New incentives are needed to get coordinated medical care. New support is needed to encourage more hospitals to adopt the information technology systems that record a patient’s allergies and medical history.

Tuesday’s Telephone Town Hall

Last Tuesday, I hosted a telephone town hall meeting with Central New Jersey residents, where we discussed the numerous challenges facing our country, including job creation, health care reform, and energy sustainability. If you missed it, you can listen to a recording of it [here](#) . Town hall participants also were able to take part in interactive polls, including one where I asked how they get their health coverage. The results of this non-scientific survey were private insurance – 59 percent; Medicare – 37 percent; no coverage – 2 percent; uncertain – 2 percent; and Medicaid – 1 percent.

I will be holding another telephone town hall on Tuesday, February 9 at 7:45 p.m. If you would like to join the telephone town hall and automatically receive a call on February 9, please fill out the form on my [home page](#) .

Beware of Haiti Relief Scams

On Wednesday, I spoke on the House floor paying tribute to those affected by the earthquake in Haiti. You can watch the speech [here](#) .

As I previously wrote, the American people time and time again have demonstrated tremendous generosity in response to tragedy. Unfortunately, such times also feature scam artists trying to take advantage of such generosity. The FBI issued a ["Haitian Earthquake Relief Fraud Alert"](#) which advises Internet users to adhere to certain guidelines, including avoiding unsolicited emails and verifying the legitimacy of a non-profit.

Sincerely,

RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress

P.S. Just a reminder: I always want to hear from you, but please don't reply to this e-mail. Instead, please email me through my website at www.holt.house.gov , or call me at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT (1-877-874-4658) to let me know what's on your mind. Please also note that you may unsubscribe from this list by clicking on the "unsubscribe" link at the bottom of this email.